

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
(ADOPTED 1/24/05)**

**PRESENTATION, INTERVIEWS, SPECIAL SESSION & WORKSESSION
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Monday, January 3, 2005

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mayor Porter | City Manager Matthews |
| Councilmember Austin-Lane | Deputy City Clerk Carpenter |
| Councilmember Barry | Communications Manager Moffet |
| Councilmember Elrich | ECD Director Daines |
| Councilmember Mizeur | Senior Planner Inerfeld |
| Councilmember Seamens | |
| Councilmember Williams | |

The City Council convened at 7:36 p.m. in the Municipal Building Council Chambers, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Austin-Lane commented on the recent mailing about the community center and stressed that Council is interested in public input. She suggested two items for upcoming agendas: 1) reduced meeting schedule to allow staff to have more time to do what is requested of them; and, 2) related to the first item, consideration of increasing the \$5000 limit that the City Manager may spend without Council approval.

Mr. Williams acknowledged the Asian tsunami and how such an event puts things in perspective. He also commented about additional improvements needed on Carroll Avenue.

Mr. Seamens announced a number of upcoming hearings being held about the Inter-County Connector and the need for volunteers to work in opposition to the ICC.

Ms. Porter commented on her and Mr. Elrich's participation in a press conference concerning the draft environmental impact statement recently released about the ICC.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Seth Grimes, Willow Ave., Board Member of Sustainable Takoma, commented on the delay in Council adoption of minutes, which is beyond the five weeks considered as reasonable by the Open Meetings Compliance Board.

Ms. Matthews noted that she shares the concern. There are a number of sets of minutes ready for

Council review. The backlog of minutes should be cleared within the next 30 to 60 days.

PRESENTATION

1. Update on the Community Center Construction Project.

Ms. Matthews reported that the community center information brochure was mailed to all city households the week of December 26. The mailing list is being corrected as we hear of delivery problems. The public hearing on the community center bond issue will be held on January 10. Ms. Matthews noted a number of problems that occurred recently as a result of the construction, including a frozen water line and an electrical line that was struck by the contractor.

Rino Aldrighetti, 7213 Central Avenue, commented on the newsletter and spoke in opposition to cutting the newsletter budget to fund the community center project. He suggested that a committee should be created to look at the mission and vision of the newsletter.

INTERVIEWS

2. Facade Advisory Board - James O'Brien

The Council interviewed Mr. O'Brien. He has lived in the city for over 20 years, is a registered architect, and has a business in the city. Mr. O'Brien commented on his interest in providing technical expertise to the board..

3. Nuclear Free Takoma Park Committee - Kristan Markey

The Council interviewed Mr. Markey. He cited his background in chemistry and physics, his experience and interest in organizing around nuclear issues at the grassroots level.

SPECIAL SESSION

4. Resolution re: Appointments to the Citizens Liaison Committee to the Community Center

Mr. Elrich moved the resolution appointing additional members to the committee, with the amendment that they be "provisionally appointed" until the required 30 day notice in the newsletter has passed. At that point, a final resolution should be scheduled appointing all the members. Seconded by Mr. Seamens. Ms. Porter affirmed that the Council intends to advertise the committee in the newsletter and reaffirm appointments later.

Appointees: Sheryl Brugh (Ward 6), Mary Carter-Williams (Ward 3); Paul Chrostowski (Ward 1), Juanita Kus (Ward 1); Anne Polansky (Ward 3).

Council discussed the importance of public notice of the committee and its activities, and

directed the City Manager to publicize the committee more fully.

Wayne Sherwood commented on the past work of the committee, noting how the City stopped seeking its input. He believes the committee can be helpful in future decisions.

Jim DiLuigi, 7106 13th Avenue commented on the disconnect that occurs at times between staff and advisory committees.

The resolution was adopted unanimously (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Seamens, Williams; ABSENT: Mizeur).

**Resolution #2005-01
(Attached)**

WORKSESSION

5. Boston Avenue Permit Parking.

Ms. Austin-Lane introduced the topic of the expansion of permit parking in the 600-700 blocks of Boston Avenue, in the area that is currently two hour parking. The North Takoma Citizens Association concurred with the change. After confirming that alternative fuel vehicles continue to receive the reduced permit rate, and that the hours of permit parking are being regularized throughout the city, the Council directed that a public hearing and first reading of the ordinance be scheduled as soon as possible.

6. City Logo.

Communications Director Moffet provided a presentation on the variations of the City Seal that are being used throughout City departments. In anticipation of the Gateway Wayfinding project, she contracted with Gallagher & Associates to start to develop a uniform design that would be used in all City communications.

Council discussed the project at length, expressing concerns about lack of community involvement in the project, the potential expense, and potential loss or dilution of the history of the City Seal. Ms. Porter summarized Council's direction that this should be the beginning of a citizen involvement process, to include the Arts and Humanities Commission, Historic Takoma, the Facade Advisory Board, groups of artists, and others.

BREAK

Council recessed for a scheduled break at 9:28 p.m. and reconvened in Worksession at 9:45 p.m.

7. Gateway Wayfinding Sign System.

Senior Planner Inerfeld introduced the presentation on the Gateway Wayfinding sign design. He described in detail the public input received on the designs. Mr. Inerfeld noted that the Wayfinding Advisory Committee would like to suggest that the City request two exceptions from the State Highway Administration, because staff has been advised that SHA would not approve the proposed arrow design nor the proposed font size on streets with speed limits above 25 mph.

Terry Healy of Gallagher and Associates showed a Power Point presentation on the sign designs.

Council discussed the designs at length and asked questions about post material and cost, signage content, what quantity of signs can be obtained for the \$17,000 available, the color, type of banners, sign fonts, the budget for the project. A number of concerns were raised: the need for additional community input; the large size of some of the signs; the importance of clear and readable colors and fonts; what names will be used to identify locations; and what items and locations are chosen for signs.

There was Council consensus on asking for the exceptions from SHA, with the point size being a higher priority than the arrows.

Ms. Daines suggested that Council think of this as a program that will be implemented over many years. It is packaged so that it can evolve over time

8. Council Meeting Minutes

Ms. Matthews described the staff proposal to prepare less detailed minutes of meetings to allow for minutes to be provided to Council for review within two to three weeks of a meeting. The minutes which have been provided up to now contain far more detail than is required by law.

Ms. Moffet briefly explained a technology that is being explored by staff which would facilitate web streaming and electronic archiving of Council meetings. The software can be integrated with minutes to provide easy access to details of Council discussion. The system would cost in the \$14,000 range. Ms. Matthews noted that staff is still exploring the technology and is not recommending the software at this time.

Council discussed the proposal to produce less detailed minutes. The majority of Councilmembers were comfortable with trying the more abbreviated minutes. Issues raised included the importance of preserving/safeguarding the videotapes for five years; meeting the requirements of state law with the minutes; the possibility of adding additional detail to minutes later; using the time saved to provide more information on the web page; and the descriptions of closed sessions.

9. COG Appointments

Councilmembers indicated their interest in serving on COG Committees:

Mayor Porter - Transportation Planning Board.

Councilmember Austin-Lane - None at this time.

Councilmember Barry - None at this time.

Councilmember Elrich - Transportation Planning Board Alternate.

Councilmember Seamens - Public Safety Policy Committee

Councilmember Williams - Continue on current committees.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 p.m.